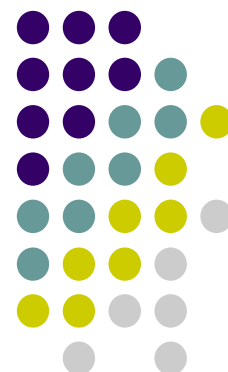


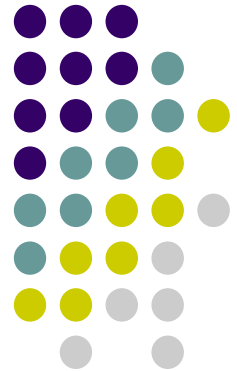
# ATV Utilization In North Dakota



*Strategic Plan*  
2003–2006

North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department

# Table of Contents



Introduction .....	3
Strategic Issues .....	4
Market Assessment .....	5
Mission Statement .....	8
Vision Statement .....	9
Strategic Objectives .....	10
Objective #1 .....	11
Objective #2 .....	12
Objective #3 .....	13
Objective #4 .....	14
Facts & Figures .....	15

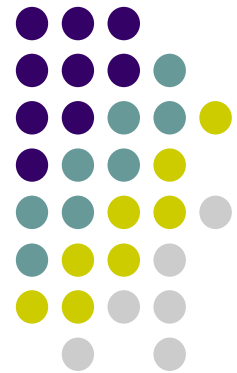
# Introduction

The plan which follows is designed to provide the North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department, along with other public agencies and private organizations, with clear direction regarding strategies relating to All Terrain Vehicle (ATV) utilization in North Dakota.

Development of this plan relied on input from key stakeholder groups that are either involved with or impacted by ATV usage including:

- \* N.D. Parks & Recreation Department
- \* N.D. Game & Fish Department
- \* N.D. Safety Council
- \* N.D. Forest Service
- \* U.S. Forest Service
- \* Snowmobile North Dakota
- \* Burleigh County Sheriff's Department

Furthermore, results from a market research study conducted in the Spring of 2003 were also used to determine needs, trends and perceptions surrounding ATV utilization.



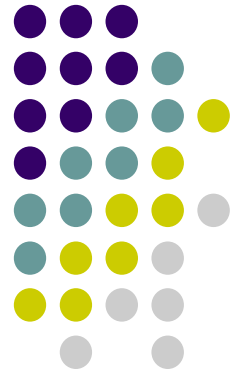
## Purpose of the Plan

Strategic plans provide organizations with a roadmap to the future. They chart a path designed to allow an organization to respond to market conditions & trends.

By providing focus, strategic plans also enable organizations to make the best use of their limited financial, technical and human resources.

Strategic plans typically cover an extended time period, anywhere from three to five years.

# Strategic Issues



The following information was gleaned from the strategic assessment described at right:

## Strategic Issues Identified:

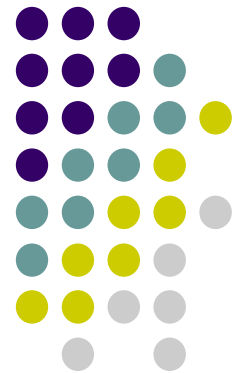
- A. Establish designated ATV use areas in ND.
- B. Improve safety, especially relating to children, helmets and rules of the road.
- C. Encourage the establishment of ATV clubs throughout the state.
- D. Evaluate state laws to more appropriately reflect current usage and emerging trends.
- E. Increase public awareness relative to areas that are currently available for ATV use.
- F. Determine responsibility for monitoring and enforcing laws within designated use areas.

## Strategic Assessment Process

During the Spring of 2003, Agency MABU interviewed representatives from the North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department to assess strategic issues and conduct market research activities.

In addition, Agency MABU facilitated a planning session with representatives from North Dakota Parks & Recreation, along with other federal and state agencies, as a means of further assessing strategic issues and opportunities relating to ATV utilization in North Dakota.

# Market Assessment



Key findings from the market research study of ATV users in North Dakota are as follows:

## Profile of ATV Users In North Dakota

- Over half of survey respondents (51.8%) use their ATV in excess of 100 times/year.
- Over half of adult survey respondents (54.1%) indicated that they do not wear a helmet when riding an ATV. However, respondents indicated that nearly half of all children (48.8%) “always” wear a helmet while operating their ATV’s.
- The majority of survey respondents (82%) stated that they or someone in their household has taken an ATV safety course in North Dakota.
- Approximately two out of three (68.8%) survey respondents license their ATV.
- Nearly all (97.7%) survey respondents are unaware of any ATV clubs in their area.
- The average age of ATV users throughout North Dakota is 40-49 years old.
- The majority of survey respondents (61.7%) believe that registration fees for ATVs provide little or no benefit to ATV users.

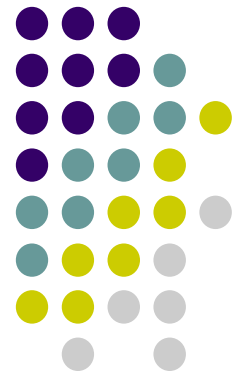
## Overview of Market Research

In January 2003, Agency MABU conducted a market research study to assess utilization patterns and trends relating to ATVs.

A random sample of 2,300 ATV users throughout North Dakota were surveyed, of which 829 individuals completed the written survey (36% response rate).

Due to the high response rate and homogenous nature of the sample group, the results represent a 3.5% margin of error.

# Market Assessment



Key findings continued:

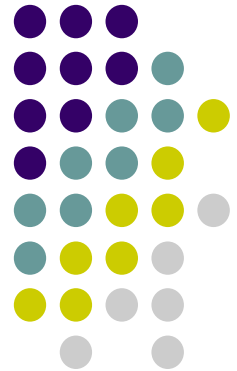
## Satisfaction with Trails

- The majority of ATV users (61.6%) have “neutral” feelings about their satisfaction with the number of recreational riding areas for ATVs in North Dakota. Of the remaining survey respondents, 15.0% indicated they are “very dissatisfied,” and 13.2% stated they are “somewhat dissatisfied” with the number of ATV recreational riding areas in the state. On the flip side, 6.0% stated they are “somewhat satisfied” and 4.2% indicated they are “very satisfied” with the number of recreational ATV trails.
- Written comments reveal that the vast majority of survey respondents are unaware of any recreational use areas for ATVs in North Dakota.

## Interest in Establishing Trails

- Survey respondents are divided into thirds regarding the desire to establish designated recreational use areas for ATVs in North Dakota. Of the respondents, 38.1% have “no” or “low” interest, 32.6% have “moderate” interest and 29.3% have “high” interest.
- Of those who desire ATV use areas to be developed in North Dakota, the two most requested regions are: 1) the Badlands and 2) the Missouri River/Lewis & Clark Trail.

# Market Assessment



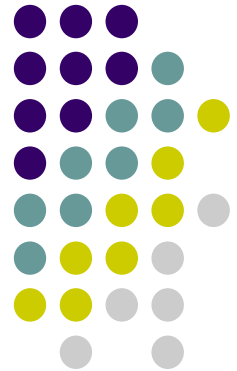
Key findings continued:

## ATV Use

- The primary use of ATVs in North Dakota is split evenly between recreational activities (47.5%) and work-related activities (52.5%).
- Summer is the season when respondents indicated they use their ATVs most often (35.4%), followed closely by Spring at 28.6% and Fall at 24.6% of the time.
- When riding recreationally, survey respondents ride most often on private land.

## Suggestions for Improvement

- Suggestions for improvement included comments both in support of and in opposition to establishing designated ATV use areas in North Dakota.
- The most commonly mentioned ideas related to: 1) needing more recreational use areas, 2) building awareness about ATV use areas that are currently available for recreational purposes and 3) improving safety.



# Mission Statement

*North Dakota's ATV program exists to advance and support the use of All Terrain Vehicles in North Dakota through the:*

- \* Development of use areas*
- \* Provision of safety education*
- \* Enforcement of laws*
- \* Communication of pertinent information to targeted audiences (e.g. ATV users, ATV dealers, legislators, etc.)*

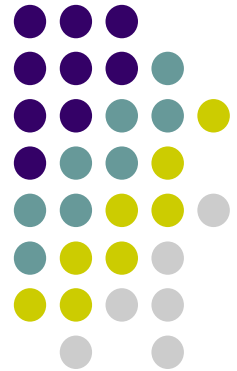
## Purpose of a Mission Statement

The mission statement of a program or organization concisely defines its reason for existence.



# Vision Statement

*The vision for North Dakota's ATV program is to establish an operational model that promotes collaboration between public and private entities as a means of creating a high quality, safe riding experience for ATV users throughout North Dakota.*

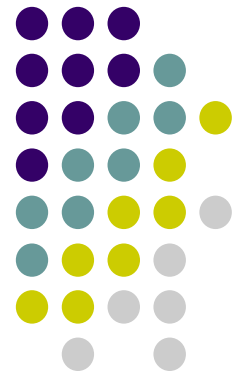


## Purpose of a Vision Statement

A vision statement defines a positive, realistic future state for a program or organization.

It paints a vivid picture as to where the organization or program is headed.

# Strategic Objectives



## Strategic Objectives Defined:

Strategic objectives represent broad areas of emphasis that are most important to an organization's or program's ultimate success.

In order to establish a solid foundation for North Dakota's ATV program, the North Dakota Department of Parks & Recreation has identified the following areas to be of strategic significance:

### Objective #1

Establish an organizational structure.

### Objective #2

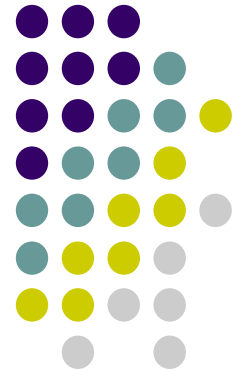
Promote the development of designated ATV use areas and supporting facilities.

### Objective #3

Enhance safety education/enforcement.

### Objective #4

Expand public affairs efforts.



# **Objective #1**

## **Organizational Structure**

Goal #1: Create an ATV Advisory Task Force with representatives from key stakeholder groups to assist in validating, modifying and implementing the strategic plan.

Goal #2: Develop a plan and process to encourage the development of ATV clubs throughout North Dakota.

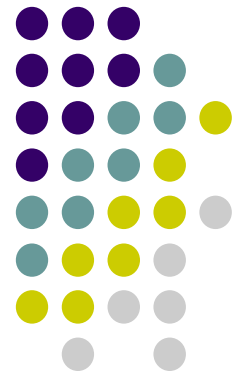
Goal #3: Determine leadership and staffing resources required to provide direction, oversight and implementation of the ATV strategic plan.

Goal #4: Identify financial resources available to support the ATV strategic plan.

Goal #5: Establish minimum criteria for creating and designing ATV use area in North Dakota (e.g., trail grooming, law enforcement, land preservation, safety, signage, etc.)

# Objective #2

## ATV Use Areas



Goal #1: Identify and inform the public of use areas that are currently available for ATV's in North Dakota.

Goal #2: Establish and communicate rules and regulations for ATV's within designed use areas in North Dakota.

Goal #3: Establish standards and guidelines for trails and use area development.

Goal #4: Provide funding support to enhance the public facilities at current and future designated ATV use areas in North Dakota (e.g. camping, parking, rest rooms, etc.).

Goal #5: Initiate a limited number of "designated ATV use area" pilot projects in targeted locations throughout the state.

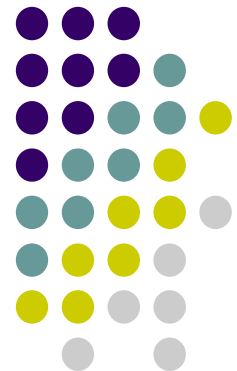
- Identify prospective sites and timetables for developing future ATV use areas.

- Avoid taking on multiple projects at the same time. Doing so will only tend to spread the resources thin and may result in sub-quality ATV riding experiences.

- Encourage the development of a variety of ATV use area options with the pilot projects (e.g. long and short routes, looped and straight-lined routes, etc.).

# **Objective #3**

## **Education & Enforcement**



Goal #1: Explore the merits of offering the ATV safety education course through an “online” program, in addition to or in place of the current home-based safety program.

Goal #2: Conduct a public safety awareness campaign to promote helmet use while riding ATV units.

Goal #3: Explore the feasibility of providing mandatory, onsite safety education for youth who drive ATV units.

Goal #4: Distribute ATV safety education literature to dealers, and encourage them to hand it out as part of new and used purchases.

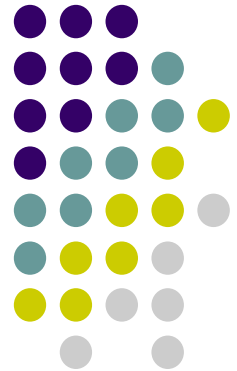
Goal #5: Conduct media relations activities to promote safety education to the general public.

Goal #6: Define and determine the responsibility for monitoring and enforcing laws and regulations in designated ATV use areas.

Goal #7: Engage law enforcement entities in efforts relating to ATV use areas and regulations.

# Objective #4

## Public Affairs



Goal #1: Review existing laws and regulations as they relate to current ATV usage. Identify changes necessary and seek legislative action as deemed appropriate.

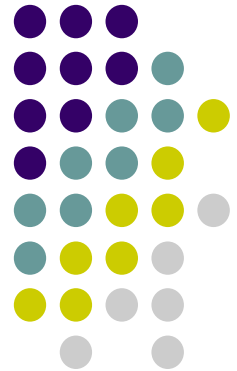
Goal #2: Add an ATV section to the North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department's existing website.

Goal #3: Create and distribute a regular newsletter to ATV clubs, dealers and operators.

Goal #4: Update and regularly distribute informational materials addressing laws, registration, safety, use areas, enforcement and etiquette to targeted audiences.

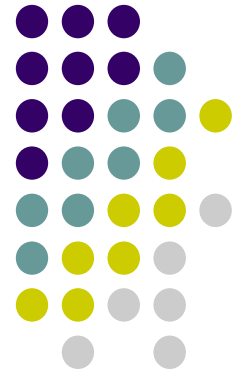
Goal #5: As ATV use areas are designated and developed, work with the North Dakota Division of Tourism to promote to ATV enthusiasts from outside of the state.

# Facts & Figures

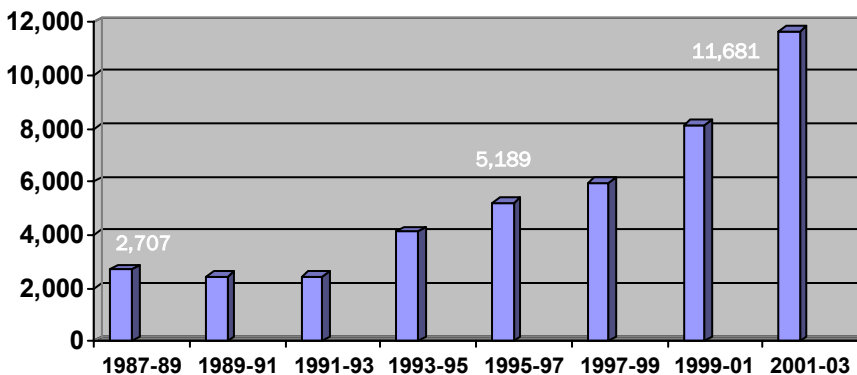


- According to North Dakota Century Code (Chapter 39-29):
  - \* “All terrain vehicle” means any motorized, off-highway vehicle fifty inches or less in width, have a dry weight of one thousand pounds or less, traveling on three or more low pressure tires, designed for operator use only with no passengers, having a seat/saddle designed to be straddled by the operator, and handlebars for steering control.
  - \* Upon sale of an all terrain vehicle, dealers collect a five dollar safety fee from the buyer. This is a one time assessment to support ATV safety education and promotion.
  - \* ATVs are registered through the North Dakota Department of Transportation. A registration fee of \$5 is assessed by NDDOT, and covers a period of two years. For each ATV registered, there is also an ATV trail tax of \$5, a fee which is placed into a fund managed by the North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department.
- The North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department is authorized by the Legislature to expend up to \$50,000 per biennium from the trail tax fund to develop ATV use areas, facilities and safety programs.

# Facts & Figures



- The number of registered ATVs in North Dakota has grown steadily, especially in the past decade.



## Registered ATVs

1987-89: 2,707  
 1989-91: 2,425  
 1991-93: 2,440  
 1993-95: 4,137  
 1995-97: 5,189  
 1997-99: 5,974  
 1999-01: 8,123  
 2001-03: 11,681

- The North Dakota Parks & Recreation Department offers a home study course for youth, ages 12-16, who do not have a valid driver's license or ATV Safety Certificate, and who plan to ride ATVs on lands other than those owned by their parents or guardians. Upon taking a written exam and receiving a score of 75% or higher, the student receives a safety certification card. The Student Safety Course includes:
  - \* An ATV student safety manual.
  - \* A booklet covering ATV and snowmobile laws.
  - \* A skills certification form.
- Relatively few clubs or member-based ATV organizations currently exist in North Dakota. One such example is the Trailrider's Club of Bismarck.